

State Dept. review completed

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 4377

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SUBJECT: CIA NSA STORY

USIA

JOINT EMBASSY/USIS

NSC

REF: STATE 140124 CIRCULAR

CIA

DOO

NEW

RSR

1. THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY OFFICIAL ITALIAN REACTION TO REPORTS OF CIA SUPPORT OF US STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS.

2. INITIAL PRESS REACTION FOLLOWING CIA-NSA REPORTS SCATTERED AND LIMITED TO STRAIGHT NEWSSTORIES DATED WASHINGTON OR NEW YORK, AND AN OCCASIONAL EDITORIAL. DURING PERIOD FEBRUARY 14-17 COMMUNIST PRESS GAVE STORY SLIGHTLY BIGGER PLAY, INCLUDING STORIES BY JOHN CAPPELLI ON "STUDENT SPIES" IN WEST BERLIN FREE UNIVERSITY. THIS WEEK FEATURE STORIES HAVE BEGUN TO APPEAR IN WEEKLY MAGAZINES (E.G. ESPRESSO, FEB 26). INTEREST IN STORY NATURALLY HEIGHTENED BY ITALIAN PRESS PLAY OF DREW PEARSON STORY ON DC PARTY-CIA RELATIONSHIP AND OF CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY.

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3. SUBJECT HAS NOT BEEN RAISED BY ANY STUDENT WITH WHOM EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE HAD CONTACT SINCE STORY BROKE. AT A USIS SPONSORED LECTURE FEB 17 BY PROF. HAROLD C. DEUTSCH ON NATO FOR 140 ITALIAN POLITICAL YOUTH LEADERS, UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, AND CULTURAL YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS, QUESTIONS WERE RAISED ON VIETNAM AND OTHER SUBJECTS, BUT NONE ON CIA-NSA. EXCHANGES OFFICER REPORTS THAT FULBRIGHT COMMISSION HAS HEARD NOTHING FROM ITS MANY CONTACTS IN THE LOCAL STUDENT AND ACADEMIC WORLD.

4. IN GENERAL ITALIANS NOT SHOCKED BY NEWS THAT US GOVERNMENT GIVES FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, SINCE IT IS ROUTINE PROCEDURE WITH GOI. THEY ARE PUZZLED (AND THEREFORE SUSPICIOUS) AT FACT THAT USG CHOSE TO GIVE THIS SUPPORT

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